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Recognition Awards Recipients

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RECOGNITION AWARD RECIPIENTS

Ralph W. Dimmick

Dr. Dimmick worked as a professor at the University of Tennessee for 4 decades. During this time, he conducted a long-term investigation of northern bobwhite populations and habitat at the Ames Plantation in Grand Junction Tennessee, home of the Annual National Bird Dog Field Trial. Dr. Dimmick's data from Ames Plantation tell an interesting story that encapsulates on 1 area what has happened to bobwhites throughout the southeastern coastal plain. Along with documenting the near extinction of a local bobwhite population in relation to habitat loss and deterioration, Dr. Dimmick's research demonstrated how bobwhite coveys are a dynamic social unit. His research also formed a basis for how to index flush counts of bobwhites in relation to mark-recapture population estimates. His work on lipid and triglyceride dynamics was among the first to assess these physiological processes using wild quail. Although Ralph recently retired from UT, he remains active in the southeastern quail world through his service as the leader for developing a Southeastern Plan for Bobwhite Management, at the request of the Directors of the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

Ron Engel-Wilson

Ron Engel-Wilson has been involved in quail research and management in the southwestern United States for over 20 years. During the past 15 years, until his retirement in December 2001, he was the Small Game Supervisor for the Arizona Game & Fish Department (AG&FD). One of his major responsibilities was managing Arizona's 4 native species of quail. Being the pointman for quail management for the AG&FD is a job requiring professionalism, discipline, and almost inhuman patience because it is a job that is often immensely frustrating. Ron constantly had to cajole and attempt to satisfy a diversity of special interest groups all intent on successfully implementing their own specific agendas for quail management in Arizona. Quite often Ron's professionalism and integrity failed to satisfy the self-interests of a few politically well-connected individuals, yet he always endeavored to do what was best for quail conservation with the full knowledge that his official positions would likely aggravate influential people and consequently his supervisors.

Ron always tried to do what was best for quail and as a result, Gambel's, scaled and Montezuma quail populations in Arizona are better off than they might have been had not Ron been involved in their stewardship. Montezuma quail populations in particular have benefitted because of Ron's conservation ethic. Arizona is perhaps the only state in the United States where a harvestable surplus of Montezuma quail is maintained on an annual basis. Therefore, any individ-

ual who has enjoyed a Montezuma quail hunt in Arizona should be grateful for Ron's abilities to get ranchers, sportsmen's groups, as well as state and federal land managers, to work together on behalf of Montezuma quail.

Ron also made significant contributions to endangered masked bobwhite recovery in Arizona and Sonora, Mexico. As a Recovery Committee member, he argued persuasively to modify long-established captive-rearing and release protocols that were not effective, and his efforts helped convince the United States Fish & Wildlife Service to adopt new methodology that ultimately increased post-release survival of masked bobwhite chicks released on the Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge. In addition, Ron's professional relationships with agency wildlife biologists in Sonora, facilitated establishment of management actions that enhanced recovery of the last remaining wild masked bobwhite populations in the world. Ron's character and integrity are highly regarded by his colleagues in Mexico. Consequently, an endorsement from Ron always guaranteed cooperation and support from agency biologists in Sonora. Ron deserves much of the credit for the positive cooperative relationship that currently exists among federal and state biologists in both Mexico and the United States who are all working together to recover masked bobwhites.

Ron was also a pleasure to work with in the field. Whenever, his assistance was needed with fieldwork in Sonora, he enthusiastically participated as productive team member. Most often he volunteered his services and expertise without having to be asked to do so, knowing full well that he would have to work long hours under miserable summer field conditions. Yet he never complained, often offered suggestions that increased the efficiency of data collection, and always volunteered to help collect data again. If you were fortunate enough to be doing fieldwork with Ron, you were guaranteed an exceptional meal at the end of the day. He always provided his field partners with superb meals that took considerable time to prepare even when he was exhausted from the daily trials of fieldwork. Many people who have been associated with Ron on a professional level know how much of himself he has devoted to bettering the natural resources in Arizona. He is regarded as a consummate professional who has volunteered for important tasks that no one else wanted to do because of the work involved and/or the political ramifications associated with the task. Ron has almost no ego, and has never sought personal recognition or awards for all that he has accomplished on behalf of quail conservation in particular, and natural resource conservation in general. His reward is knowing that he did the best he could for the outdoors he loves and the animals and plants that inhabit it. Ron will likely be embarrassed by the Distinguished Contribution Award presented to him by his professional quail colleagues attending QUAIL V. He

nevertheless deserves the thanks and recognition of his contemporaries for all he has done for quail conservation in the southwest.

Fred S. Guthery

Fred Guthery was born and raised on small ranch in rural eastern Oregon where he developed a keen interest in wildlife. He attended a Oregon State University where he graduated with a degree in Wildlife Science in 1970. He left Oregon soon thereafter to attend Texas A&M University where he received a M.S. and a Ph.D. in Wildlife & Fisheries Sciences. He started his research with upland gamebirds at Texas Tech University in the late 1970s where he and his students conducted research on ring-necked pheasants, lesser prairie chickens, and scaled quail. He was lured to the Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute at Texas A&I University to initiate a quail research program. He then spent almost the next 15 years in south Texas, researching numerous aspects of bobwhite life history and management in semi-arid ecosystems. The work of he and his students illuminated previously unknown aspects of bobwhite life history and ecology, particularly as these relate to traditional south Texas land management practices. Consequently, Fred's research was not only of high scientific quality, but also provided ranchers with sound scientifically based management information that directly benefited bobwhite populations on the ground.

During the early 1990s, Fred became involved in efforts to recover the endangered masked bobwhite in southern Arizona and northwestern Sonora, Mexico. Little was known about the habitat requirements of masked bobwhites until Fred became involved in recovery efforts. His encyclopedic knowledge of bobwhite ecology and his strong scientific abilities enabled him to design research that yielded critical information on masked bobwhite habitat requirements and current habitat deficiencies in Sonora and Arizona. This research fundamentally changed the way masked bobwhite habitat is managed in Mexico and the United States. Although masked bobwhites remained endangered, Fred's research significantly enhanced recovery and masked bobwhites are now better off because Fred was involved in their recovery. During his masked bobwhite research, Fred developed new concepts relative to how bobwhites utilize the landscapes they occupy. He used quantitative techniques new to wildlife biologists to develop his space/time theory of habitat use, which has resulted in what appears to be a unifying concept in bobwhite ecology that eventually may be applicable to bobwhites regardless of where they live in their geographic range.

During the late 1990s, Fred moved to Oklahoma State University where he is the current occupant of

the Bollenbach Chair for Wildlife Ecology. He continues to refine his unifying theory about bobwhites with high quality research projects that he and his students are conducting in Oklahoma and the Panhandle of Texas. Fred has inarguably pushed quail conservation forward to an arena that is forcing his contemporaries to reexamine their traditional ideas about quail ecology. He is a scientist of exceptional quality and integrity. His current and former students will tell you that he asked a great deal of them, but most of these students will tell you that they are better wildlife professionals as a result of working with Fred. Moreover, anyone who knows Fred will tell you that he is harder on himself than he is on anyone else. Finally, most people probably view Fred in a professional light as one of the foremost quail experts in North America, and there is no question that this is true. His quarterly Kleberg Reports and now Bollenbach Chair reports in Quail Unlimited magazine have certainly added to his mystique. However, those of us who have been fortunate enough to work with Fred over the years, and have had the good fortune to become his friend know that a very good person lies under that scientific cloak he generally wears. Fred is a kind, compassionate and generous individual. These are the attributes that many are often unaware of, but they are attributes that have enabled to him to relate to people of diverse backgrounds to accomplish things for quail where it really counts—on the ground and out in the pasture. I can say without hesitation, that the only endangered quail in North America might well have become extinct were it not for Fred's ability to establish the trust that persists only among good friends. Few would argue that Fred Guthery is a giant among quail professionals throughout the world and he richly deserves the Distinguished Contribution Award that was bestowed on him by his professional contemporaries who convened at QUAIL V.

Sanford D. Schemnitz

Dr. Schemnitz conducted the first modern, systematic study of scaled quail ecology and published this work as a Wildlife Monograph in 1961. Also, during the early 1960s he published the first definitive comparative analysis of scaled quail and bobwhite ecology. Thirty-four years after conducting his landmark study on scaled quail in the Oklahoma panhandle, Dr. Schemnitz returned to his old study area and collected data for an analysis of land use changes in relation to declining scaled quail numbers. In addition to his work on scaled quail, which also included writing the scaled quail species account for the Birds of North America Series, Dr. Schemnitz served our profession as Editor-in-Chief of the Fourth Edition of the Wildlife Management Techniques Manual.